

India



INDEPENDENCE DAY

August 15

India 2020: The Emerging Global Superpower ?

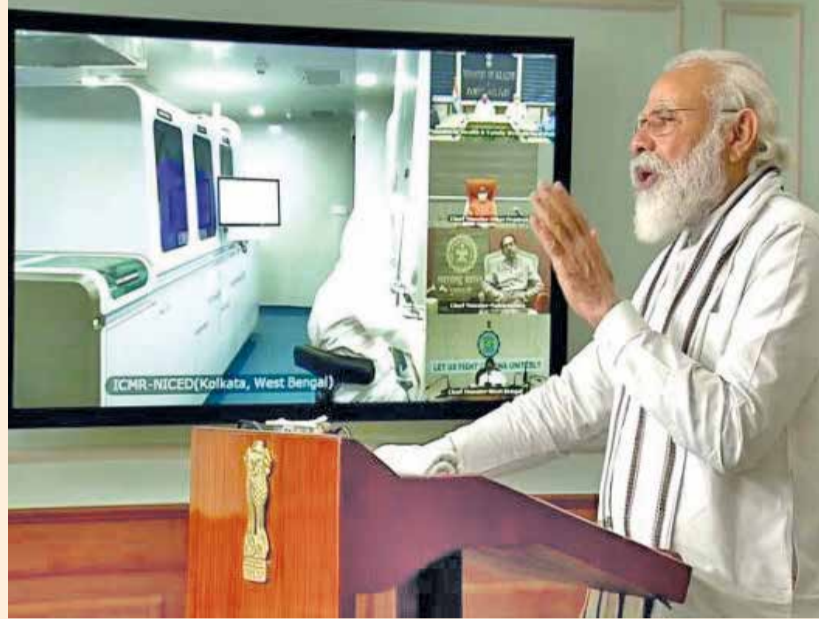


By Srijan Pal Singh
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Fast forward 7 decades. India never saw a major famine as an independent nation. Even in the COVID-19 times, when some 80 million Indian migrant workers were forced into economically harsh conditions - the government and the civil society rose together to cater to their basic needs. You may have witnessed the pictures of families walking back to their villages often on foot, but what is perhaps less shown is that millions of Indians mobilized billions to do their best to take care of their distressed countrymen. We at Kalam Centre too, managed to feed 500,000 meals - and the nation had many more and bigger initiatives.

In March 2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19, India was reeling in its medical system. Hospitals had no PPEs, markets had no sanitizers or masks. India was then importing nearly 100% of its PPEs. It was thought to be the basket case which would collapse under the pressure of the pandemic. But not only did India endure through one of the longest lockdowns across the world it silently revamped its entire medical supply industry. By June India was making 200,000 kits a day and by the end of July 2020, India opened up to export PPE and other protective supplies to the rest of the world. I came across a group of tailors in Manipur who had switched over from stitching uniforms and started making reusable masks and cottage industries in Uttar Pradesh who had started making organic sanitizers

This year India completes 73 years as an independent nation. A nation which arose as an assembly of disjointed princely states and oppressions of the exploitative British Raj, has come a long way. In the middle of the second world war and despite theoretically being theoretically on the "winning side", it was India which saw the greatest and silent tragedy of the times when in a single year of 1943, during the Bengal Famine, India lost 3 million humans to abject hunger which was entirely due to the negligence of the ruling British Empire. In comparison the holocaust killed 6 million Jews in 6 years, but I would not be surprised if you never heard of the Bengal famine. Indian were, after all, considered expendables.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched three high throughput COVID-19 testing facilities via video conferencing. These facilities are located at the National Institutes of Indian Council of Medical Research, at Kolkata, Mumbai and Noida.

in their homes. Almost half a dozen major India pharma companies are manufacturing generic Remdesivir and Fabpiravir, the two drugs which are front runners in the fight against coronavirus. Their price is as less as one-tenth compared to the USA. Similarly, Pune based Serum India is planning to produce 100 million doses of COVID vaccine as soon as the clinical trials are positive.

COVID has also opened a long term opportunity for India to be the next

manufacturing hub of the world. India finds an opportunity in the global manufacturing sector to strengthen its standing in the global trade scenario by strengthening ties with the United States and EU as a trusted trade partner. The fierce US-China trade war has diverted the investment flow towards India particularly under the high tariff categories. Manufacturing units around the world are looking for stable and resilient countries to shift production units out of China post the

worldwide hostility towards China over COVID-19 and disruption in the supply chain owing to over-dependency on China. Approximately 1,000 companies have applied to shift manufacturing bases from China to India. India, with its abundant workforce and a growth hungry government, is gradually emphasizing on policy amendments and infrastructure development to strengthen its economy in the post COVID era. Thus, luring in prospective manufacturing giants.

India celebrates its independence in the middle of global pandemic but also amidst hopes and opportunities. Two days, we declared provisions to enable fearlessness in honest taxpayers. Last week we declared a new education policy after a gap of more than three decades. We are contemplating the data privacy bill with provisions no less than the standards of the European union. A month ago, when China tried to intimidate India with brutal aggression, we did not cower to the economic giant of the world. We publicly denounced the expansionist desires, economically hit them back and upgraded our arsenal with the modern jets. India@73 does not panic, it finds its roar.

Standing on our 74th birthday a long way lies ahead of us and every Indian, those within India and those expats and NRIs who extend our Indian culture outside our political borders are the harbingers, beneficiaries and carriers of the challenges and opportunities which we face.

15 AUGUST
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Congratulate and extend warmest greetings to
the Indian Community in the Kingdom of Bahrain,
on the occasion of the Independence Day of India.

New Millennium School- DPS
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